Rubberized Asphalt Concrete

California currently generates more than 40 million scrap tires annually. These are tires that have outlived their purpose and can potentially threaten California's environment and our health if not managed properly. While nearly 75 percent of these tires are recycled, our State still faces the challenge of handling over ten million scrap tires annually, the majority of which end up in landfills or, in some cases, illegal stockpiles.

Rubberized asphalt concrete is a road material made with recycled tires. It is commonly known as RAC and has been in use since the late 1970s. RAC is a proven product, one that is cost-efficient and an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional road paving.

Good for the Bottom Line

RAC is cost-effective. A two-inch thick rubberized asphalt concrete overlay can save as much as $50,000 per lane mile when compared to a four-inch thick conventional asphalt overlay.

RAC is long lasting. It resists cracking and case studies have demonstrated over and over again that RAC, when designed properly, lasts much longer than conventional materials – often 50 percent longer. This saves on maintenance costs.

Good for the Community

RAC is durable, safe and quiet. One of the most compelling arguments for using RAC is the potential to quiet our roadways. Research has shown that noise can be reduced as much as 85 percent in some instances. Additionally, RAC provides better traction and visibility in wet weather, which may reduce highway accidents.

Good for the Environment

RAC is environmentally friendly.
A two-inch thick resurfacing project uses over 2,000 scrap tires per lane mile. This means that for a one-mile section of a four-lane highway, over 8,000 scrap tires can be used in creating a safer, quieter, longer-lasting road!

Using RAC can help reduce the number of scrap tires that go into our landfills.

Success Stories

The city of Thousand Oaks knows first hand the benefits of using RAC. The city has been using the product since 1992.

To date, the city has used rubber from 1.55 million discarded tires in its pavement rehabilitation projects. The city found that the improvements of increased skid resistance, reduced road noise, improved riding qualities, and imperviousness to water have made the use of RAC cost-effective on a life cycle basis and more desirable than traditional asphalt concrete.

Grants are Available

The CIWMB offers funding to local governments for RAC projects. Grants are awarded regularly in varying amounts. Technical assistance is also available through the CIWMB for RAC users.

"The City of Thousand Oaks is quite pleased with its experience with RAC. We've been using RAC for over a decade and encourage the use of this product in other California cities. If we can see the benefits of RAC so can you."

— Tom Pizza, P.E.
Engineering Division Manager, City of Thousand Oaks
Construction and Right of Way Management

Contact Information

To learn more about how your jurisdiction can benefit from RAC, visit www.ciwmb.ca.gov or call (916) 341-6441.